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# SONGS OF SELMA.

FROM THE ORIGINAL OF

OSSIAN THE SON OF FINGAL.

Quis talia fando  
Temperet a lacrimis?

VIRGIL.

After having been a poet for some years, and having great pleasure in the translation of Fingal



There is no respecting the command of a fair lady, when the desire is greater a story  
than a man's ~~pretensions to literary taste~~ The Critics  
spiteful they were not much ~~pleased~~ when they compared the result of Palmer's David by Mr  
Percy to the original of Ossian. LONDON:  
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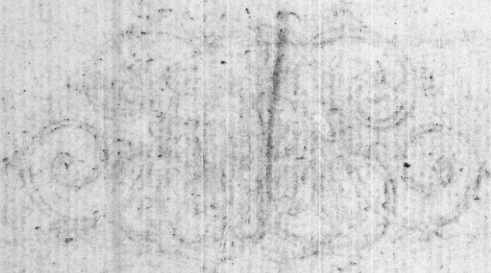
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T H E  
S O N G S O F S E L M A.



A I R light! that, breaking through the  
clouds of day,  
Dartest along the west thy silver ray;  
Whose radiant locks around their glory spread,  
As o'er the hills thou rear'st thy glittering head;  
Bright evening Star! what sees thy sparkling eye?  
What spirits glide their mouldering bodies nigh?---  
The storm is o'er; and now the murmuring sound  
Of distant torrents creeps along the ground;  
Around the rocks the lashing billows cling;  
And drowsy beetles rise on feeble wing:  
Across the plain I hear their humming flight;  
But what, ~~bright beam~~ is seen by thine all-piercing sight?--



Ha! thou dost hasten smiling to the west;  
 In Ocean's wat'ry bed to take thy rest.  
 With open arms its waves thy form embrace,  
 Bathe thy bright locks, and hide thy lovely face.  
 Farewel, thou silent harbinger of night!---  
 Thine aid's supplied by OSSIÂN's mental fight.---

I see, I feel, the light arise,  
 That opes the Bard's all-seeing eyes.---  
 And now, on *Lora's* rising ground,  
 My friends departed gather round;  
 As when they met in former days,  
 To hear and sing the songs of praise.  
 Lo! *FINGAL* like a watery cloud!  
 Around him see / his warriors croud,  
 And bards, to whom did once belong  
 The strength and sweetness of the song.  
 There *Ullin's* locks of silver gray,  
 And *Ryno*, comely as the day;  
*Alpin*, with tuneful voice; and there  
 The songstrefs sweet, *Minona* fair;

On



On whose so-softly-plaintive tongue  
Enraptur'd chiefs attentive hung.---  
Alas! my friends! if these my friends I see,  
How chang'd your faded forms appear to me!  
How chang'd indeed! since when, at FINGAL's call,  
Our songs were heard in *Selma's* echoing hall;  
When o'er the festive board and jovial shell,  
Our harps were strung of mighty deeds to tell,  
Of heroes slain, and tales of maiden's wrongs;  
Our friendly contest whose the noblest songs.  
'Twas there *Minona*, then a beauteous maid,  
Whose blushing cheeks her modest fears betray'd,  
With locks expos'd to every gust of wind,  
And tearful eye, that spoke her anxious mind,  
Stood forth, the tale of hapless love to sing;  
To soothe the soul of *Morven's* mighty king.  
The feast forgot, the chiefs no more rejoice;  
But mournful listen to her plaintive voice.  
For well they knew where *Salgar's* corse was laid,  
And *Colma's* tomb, the snow-white-bosom'd maid.

Hard

Hard was her lot, fair virgin! all alone,  
 On mountain wilds to vent her fruitless moan;  
 To chide her lover's absence, as unkind,  
 And waste her voice of musick in the wind:  
 With tears of death, in anguish, to deplore  
 Her fallen friends, who rise, alas! no more.

Her sad complaint the fair *Minona* sung,  
 In words that dropp'd from *Colma's* tuneful tongue.

### COLMA.

'Tis night; and, on the hill of storms  
 Alone doth *Colma* stray;  
 While round her shriek fantastic forms  
 Of ghosts, that hate the day.

O'er rocks the torrent roars amain,

The whirlwind's voice is high:

To save her from the wind and rain,

No friendly shelter nigh!

Rife

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

7

Rise, moon! kind stars! appear a while,  
And guide me to the place;  
Where rests my love, o'ercome with toil,  
And wearied with the chase.

Some light! direct me, helpless maid!  
Where, sitting on the ground,  
His bow unstrung is near him laid,  
His panting dogs around.

Else by the rock, the stream beside,  
I here must sit me down;  
While howls the wind, and roars the tide,  
My lover's call to drown.

Ah! why, my *Salgar*! this delay?  
Where stray thy ling'ring feet?  
Didst thou not promise in the day  
Thy love at night to meet?

End

Here



## THE SONGS OF SELMA

Here is the rock, and here the tree,

Thine own appointed spot;

Thy promise canst thou break with me?

And is my love forgot?

For thee I'd dare my brother's pride;

My father's house would fly;

For thee forsake my mother's side;

With thee to live and die.

Be hush'd, ye winds! how loud ye brawl!

Stream! stand a moment still.

Perhaps my love may hear me call,

Upon the neighbouring hill.

Ho! *Salgar!* *Salgar!* mend thy pace;

To *Colma* haste away.

'Tis I, and this th' appointed place:

Ah! wherefore this delay?

Kind

THE SONGS OF SELMA.

9

Kind moon! thou giv'st a friendly light;  
And lo! the glassy stream,  
And the grey rocks, through dusky night  
Reflect thy silver beam.

Yet I descry not *Salgar's* form:  
No dogs before him run.---  
Shall I not perish by the storm,  
Before to-morrow's sun!

But what behold I, on the heath?  
My Love | my Brother | laid!--  
O speak, my friends! nor hold your breath,  
T'affright a trembling maid.

They answer not---they sleep---they're dead---  
Alas! the horrid fight---  
Here lie their angry swords, still red  
And bleeding from the fight.

B

Ah!

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

Ah! wherefore lies, by *Salgar* slain,  
 My Brother, bleeding here?  
 Why *Salgar* murder'd, on the plain,  
 By one to me so near?

Friends of my choice! how lov'd were both!  
 Who now your fame shall raise?  
 Who sing my lover's plighted troth;  
 My brother's song of praise?

Of thousands lovely, *Salgar's* face  
 Was loveliest to the sight:  
 Renown'd my brother for the chase,  
 And terrible in fight.

Sons of my love! speak, once again---  
 Ah no!--to death a prey,  
 Silent they are, and must remain;  
 For cold their breasts of clay.

But



## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

II

But are their fleeting spirits fled  
Across the plain so soon?  
Or shun the shadows of the dead  
The glimpses of the moon?

Speak, where on ~~rock~~ or mountain grave,  
Still clash your souls of fire,  
Or reconcil'd, in some dark cave  
Your peaceful ghosts retire.

Ah! where her friends shall *Colma* find?  
Hark --- No --- they're silent still---  
No muttering answer brings the wind;  
No whisper, o'er the hill.

Fearless, yet over-whelm'd with grief,  
I sit all night in tears;  
Hopeless of comfort or relief,  
When morning light appears.

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

Yet, raise, ye friends of these, the dead;  
 On this sad spot their tomb;  
 But close not up their narrow bed,  
 Till hapless *Colma* come.

For why behind them should she stay,  
 Whose life is now a dream?  
 Together here our corse lay,  
 Beside the murmuring stream.

So shall my shivering ghost be seen,  
 Lamenting o'er the slain;  
 As homeward hies the hunter keen,  
 Benighted on the plain.

Yet shall he fearless, pass along,  
 And lend his list'ning ear:  
 For sweet, though sad, shall be my song,  
 For friends I lov'd so dear.

This

# THE SONGS OF SELMA.

13

This *Colma's* plaint; and thus with musick's tongue,  
The sweetly blushing maid of *Torman* sung,  
The soft *Minona*; while her fluttering breast  
Bespoke an heart with tender grief oppress'd;  
The sympathetick sorrow catch'd around;  
And heroes dropp'd their tears upon the ground.

Next *Ullin* came and touch'd the founding string;  
And *Alpin's* well known song flood up to sing:  
That song the tuneful bard to *Ryno* sung,  
When *Ryno* liv'd to hear his tuneful tongue:  
Heard now no more for, in their lowly bed  
Both rest in silence, slumbering with the dead.  
But ere they fell, as *Ullin* took his way  
Home from the chace, he heard, and caught, the lay.  
All sad, they sung beside the rolling stream;  
*Morar*, the first of men, their mournful theme.  
*Morar*, whose soul with *Fingal's* might compare;  
Whose sword, like *Oscar's* sword, a meteor in the air.

But



## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

But ah! he fell; his fire, bent down with ~~years~~ <sup>year,</sup>  
 And blooming sister shedding fruitless tears,  
 Minona fair; who now forsook the throng,  
 Her heart too full to lift to Ullin's song.  
 So, when the shower - presaging winds are loud,  
 The moon retires behind the western cloud.

To raise the song did I in concert join;  
 Mixing the sounds of Ullin's harp with mine.

## R Y N O.

The wind and rain at length are o'er,

And calm the noon of day;

The low'ring sky looks black no more;

But breaks in clouds away.

O'er the green hills th'inconstant Sun

Extends its fickle beam;

While murmuring through the vale doth run

The red and troubled stream.

Though

Though sweet thy murmurs, gentle stream!

More sweet the voice I hear,---

'Tis *Alpin's* song---What mournful theme

Invites my list'ning ear?

Ev'n as a blast amidst the wood,

I hear his voice complain;

Or as the surges of the flood,

When swells the ruffled main.

Why on this silent hill alone?

Thy tearful eye so red,

For whom, sweet songster dost thou moan,

And hang thy drooping head?

### ALPIN.

I mourn, O *Ryno!* for the dead,

Cold tenants of the grave:

For low with these is *Morar* laid,

The mighty and the brave!

And

## THE SONGS OF SELMA

And thou, my *Ryno*, stout and tall,

And comely as thou art,

Must, even as mighty *Morar*, fall,

And grieve the mourner's heart.

Laid in the tomb, thy head too low

To hear the hunter's cry,

Thine Arrows loose, unstrung thy bow,

Amidst the hall shall lie

Swift wert thou, *Morar*! as the roe:

Thine eyes were orbs of fire,

Darting destruction on the foe:

So terrible thine ire!

Thy sword in battle darted round,

Like light'ning o'er the plain;

Thy voice was like the thunder's sound,

Or torrents after rain.

To



To shun the fury of thy arm,  
Fled hofts the plain along ;  
Too feeble to withstand the storm :  
Thy wrath so fierce and strong !

Yet did thy rage not always burn ;  
But smooth thy brow of peace ;  
When from the fight thou didst return,  
And war was bid to cease.

Mild as the sun-beams after rain,  
Or moon-light on the hill ;  
Calm as the lake's smooth, placid plain,  
When evening winds are still.

But narrow now thy dwelling place ;  
And drear thy dark abode.  
With three small strides thy grave I trace ;  
The end of glory's road !

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

Beneath four stones, with moss o'ergrown,

The Heroe's corse is laid:

Memorial frail! yet these alone

Denote where sleeps the dead:

Save what even these instruct to find;

A leafless tree is nigh;

And long grass, whistling in the wind,

Attracts the hunter's eye.

Ah! low indeed is *Morar* laid!

No tender mother's tears

Bedew his grave; no love-lorn maid

Her fond memorial rears.

For dead is she who brought thee forth;

The tomb thy love doth hold:

Cold is the womb that gave thee birth;

And *Morglan's* daughter cold.

But

But who is this that, red with tears,

His locks as white as snow,

Comes, leaning on his staff of years,

With tottering steps and slow?---

'Tis mighty *Morar*'s aged fire;

Who mourns his only son.

He heard of *Morar*'s sword of fire,

Before the fight was done.

Of routed foes, that fled his name,

The scouts with pleasure tell:

They told his joyful fire his fame;

But told not how he fell.

Weep---O thou fire of *Morar*! weep---

Yet all thy tears are vain.

He hears not---for too found they sleep,

Who rest beneath the plain.



## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

Thy voice no more shall reach his ear,

So low in dust his head.

How in the grave shall morn appear

T'awake the slumb'ring dead.

Bravest of mortal men! farewell---

Where now thy arm of steel?

That sword, by which ten thousands fell,

No more thy foes shall feel.

No more its flaming edge of fire

Shall brighten all the wood:

No more shall trembling hosts retire,

Before its point of blood.

Thou leav'st no son behind, to grieve,

And bear his father's name:

Yet song to future time shall give

The fallen *Morar's* fame.

At *Ullin's* song with grief were all oppress'd;

When broke the bursting sigh from *Armin's* breast:

*Armin;*

*Armin*; whose son, the hope of former days,  
Was brought to mind by *Morar*'s song of praise.  
Unhappy father! robb'd, before his time,  
Of all his children in their youthful prime!  
*Carmor*, the chief of echoing *Galmer* near,  
Heard the deep sigh and saw the rising tear;  
When now, to calm the tumult in his breast,  
He thus the bard in soothing words address'd.

Why is the hero's breast with anguish torn?  
What cause hath *Armin* more than we to mourn?  
In melting sounds the songs of music roll,  
At once to sadden and to cheer the soul.  
So the soft mist, upon the silent vale,  
Ere yet the sun the dew-drops doth exhale,  
Fills the green flowers with tears; which dried away,  
The mourners lift their heads; and smile throughout the  
day.

But say the cause, that we may mourn the while;  
Why sad the chief of sea-girt *Gorma*'s isle?

ARMIN.

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

## A R M I N.

Thou think'st me sad---~~I am~~ indeed; *I'm sad /*

Nor small my cause of woe.

For children lost my heart doth bleed;

A loss thou dost not know.

Thy son, the valiant *Colgar*, lives;

Thou mourn'st not *Annire's* death;

Thy blooming daughter mine survives,

And may thy latest breath.

From *Carmor's* trunk the fairest boughs

Thus spread to lasting fame;

In me, the last of all my house,

Must perish *Armin's* name.

Rise, ye bleak autumn winds! arise,

And scour the barren heath.

Ye tempests! sweep along the skies,

And howl through woods beneath.

Come



Come roaring down, ye mountain floods!

Moon! hide thee from my sight;

Or rarely shed, through breaking clouds,

Thy pale and wat'ry light.

So shall ye paint, alas! too well,

The night when fell my pride,

When *Arindal*, the mighty, fell;

When lovely *Daura* died.

My daughter! fair, and fairer still

Thou wert than driven snow,

Fair as the moon on *Thura's* hill;

Sweet as the gale below.

*Armor*, renown'd in battle, came

And fought my *Daura's* love;

Who soon avow'd an equal flame

For him, her house approve.

But

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

But *Eark*, the son of *Ogdal*, pin'd,  
 Whose brother *Armor* flew;  
 And, wicked in revenge, divin'd  
 To cause them both to rue.

For this, disguis'd, upon his head  
 White locks of age he wore;  
 And, in a boatman's garb array'd,  
 Row'd his light skiff to shore.

With serious brow and specious tongue,  
 Come, fairest maid! he cried;  
 Thy *Armor* waits, and thinks it long  
 Till *Daura* grace his side.

From yonder rock, but just in sea,  
 Where fir-trees cast a shade,  
 Thy faithful love hath hasten'd me,  
 To fetch his constant maid.

She

She went, alas! but all in vain

She call'd on *Armor's* name;

The babbling rock replied again;

But ah! no *Armor* came.

Lov'd son of *Arduart*! why, she cried,

Dost fill me thus with fear?

'Tis *Daura* calls—Oh! why dost hide

Thy face when *Daura's* near?

Too late she found herself deceiv'd,

When laughing to the shore,

False *Eark*, whom she too soon believ'd,

Fled back, and turn'd no more.

Then louder grew her frantick grief.

" My father! send me aid—

" My Brother!—brings there none relief,

" To save a helpless maid?"



## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

Across the wave her voice was shrill;  
 And reach'd the wonted place,  
 Where *Arindal* came down the hill;  
 Returning from the chase.

Rough with the shaggy spoils he bore,  
 That mock the winter's wind;  
 His bow and arrows hung before;  
 His dogs were trail'd behind.

Base *Eark* he seiz'd, and bound him fast  
 To yonder knotted oak;  
 And scourg'd him, till he groan'd his last  
 Beneath the sturdy stroke.

Then, flying to the traitor's skiff,  
 He plies the labouring oar;  
 To bear his sister quick relief,  
 And bring her back to shore.

But

But *Armor* came, in mighty rage  
 At what vile *Eark* had done;  
 And, wild the traitor to engage,  
 Destroy'd my only son.

The boat he saw upon the wave,  
 And aim'd a feather'd dart,  
 That doom'd my child a wat'ry grave,  
 For ah! it pierc'd his heart.

Oh! *Arindal*! alas! my son!  
 In fatal error slain!  
 O *Daural*! what hath *Armor* done,  
 To cause thee grief and pain?

The lonely skiff soon lost its way;  
 The winds and waves were high;  
 When *Armor* plung'd into the sea,  
 To save his Love, or die.

## THE SONGS OF SELMA.

But sudden blew a furious blast  
 Across the rocky shore:  
 He bore it long, but sunk at last:  
 He sunk---and rose no more.

Left on the sea-beat rock, alone,  
 Was *Daura*, to complain;  
 While loud and oft was heard her moan;  
 But heard her moan in vain!

All night I stood, with straining eyes,  
 And heart-consuming grief;  
 All night I heard her piercing cries;  
 But could not give relief.

Amidst the winds, and beating rain,  
 I stood upon the shore,  
 And heard the ill-fated maid complain,  
 Till she was heard no more.



All spent with grief, her voice grew faint  
Before the break of day ;  
And, like an evening breeze, her plaint  
Died unperceiv'd away.

In this forlorn and hapless state,  
My lovely daughter died.  
O dig my grave ; and lay me strait,  
When dead, by *Daura's* side.

Mean-while, when northern tempests roar,  
And mountain waves affright,  
I sit upon the sounding shore ;  
That fatal rock in sight.  
There oft my children's ghosts I meet,  
At midnight, when they walk,  
And tread the ground with printless feet ;  
In sad and mournful talk.

The

The silent moon has heard me call--

“ O speak, my children! speak”--

Regardless yet, they vanish all;

And leave my heart to break.

Such were our themes, when *Fingal* lov'd to hear  
The harp sweet-founding in his list'ning ear;  
When, at his call, the bards their songs did raise,  
And told the moving tales of former days:  
When from the hills the chiefs, all gathering round,  
Wrapt in attention, heard th' affecting sound.  
First of a thousand bards in *Cona* fam'd,  
Then was my voice, *the voice of CONA* nam'd.  
Great my renown, while yet in youth I sung;  
But now harsh discord has untun'd my tongue!  
Through age my spirit fails; for oft I hear  
The ghosts of bards, whose songs delight mine ear;  
Yet o'er the memory, like the passing wind,  
They fly; nor leave one single trace behind.

The

The years increafing as they roll along,  
Upbraid me too, and chide th<sup>e</sup> untimely fong:  
For fhort and few, they fay, are *Ossian's* days;  
While not a bard furvives his fame to raife.

Roll on, ye dark-brown years! for, though I fing,  
No joy to me in all your courfe ye bring.  
Be raifed the tomb, where *Ossian's* bones muft lie.  
Whofe failing ftrengh foretells his end is nigh.  
The fons of fong are filent on the plain;  
And I alone of *Morven's* bards remain;  
My broken voice juft like a wintry blaft:  
I come, my friends! old *Ossian* dies at laft.

11 7 49

T H E E N D.



The years increasing as they roll along,  
Upraid me too, and chide the vainly long;  
For short and few, they say, are Odin's days;  
While not a bard survives his fame to raise.

Roll on, ye dark-brown years! for, though I sing,  
No joy to me in all your course ye bring.  
Be raised the tomb, where Odin's bones must lie,  
While failing strength foretells his end is nigh.  
The sons of song are silent on the plain;  
And I alone of Mærow's bards remain;  
My broken voice just like a wintry blast:  
I come, my friends! old Ossián dies at last.

T H E E N D.